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TO THE  
Honourable House of COMMONS,  
Now assembled in Parliament:

*The humble Remonstrance of John Smith,*  
*in behalf of the Inhabitants of MARGATE.*

CAMBRIDGE

A Letter written by John Smith, Expenditor of  
Sea-works of the Town of Margate:  
*To the Right Honourable, the Earl of WARWICK.*

Right Honourable,

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**K** Nowing your judgement, skill and experience to be great in  
Maritime affairs, and your Power and Place enabling to re-  
dresse this our condition and heavy grievances, being a busines  
of that concernment, as the neglect thereof may be of dangerous con-  
sequence to the whole Isle of *Thames*, but surely, if not speedily provid-  
ed for, will bring suddenly an unavoydable destruction upon our  
town of *Margate*, through want of timely repair of the Jettye works;  
the Sea there having of late done no little harm. I am the more  
bold to give you a short relation of our present state and condition,  
and what hath been formerly done touching the same, hoping your  
Lordship will not suffer us any longer to be wearied and waited with a  
long and chargeable attendance, and we thereby be subjected to ap-  
parent and sudden ruine; but you will afford us your assistance for  
the saving of us and our poor town: Be pleased to know, that above  
thirty years ago, sundry houses in *Margate* were taken away by the  
rage and outbreakings of the sea; whereupon the Inhabitants did sue  
to the Lord Warden of the Commissioners of Sewers, to have the  
town for the future secured against such outbreakings, and for that end

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desired fifteen able Yeomen of the country to take a view of the town, which was done accordingly, and thereupon all those houses & lands which were in danger of the sea, were taxed and scotred for the making and maintaining the works against the sea, which works upon the setting up cost near 2000.l. and these scots and assessments were continued and paid for twenty five years, and thereby through the blessing of God much good hath come to the town & whole Island there, these having not been any losse either of houses or lands, while the scot was continued.

In the year 1641. I was made Expenditor of the works there, by the Commissioners of the Sewers, allowing me a scot of two shillings in the pound, of such houses and lands as were formerly scotred, and in danger of the sea, for the maintenance and reparation of the works, and 36.l. taxed, and to be levied out of the Peer, as appears by the Scot. But upon my suit to the Commissioners, in respect I could not so well attend the same, as another, without neglecting my calling; Another was appointed, viz. one *James Hemster*, but he refused to take that office upon him, saying the same would undo him, whereupon I was constrained to continue still Expenditor: But upon my demanding a scot for the next year (for it was the custome to have one every year) for repairing the Sea works; some particular men moved the commissioners to have the scot given over, and that every man might defend himself against the sea: but I told the commissioners, that could not be, without laying the whole burthen upon a few for all, for thereby what any did for his own safety and defence, would be done and serve for others, which would prove the undoing of them that so did it, and yet not be able to keep up the works.

Upon these differences, the Commissioners did wholly reject the said works, the best and greatest part whereof, having had no reparation and maintenance, by violent rage of the sea hath been taken away since, as also many houses there and highways, by the out-breakings of the sea thrown down and carried away, to the undoing of many the inhabitants. Wherefore I, being Expenditor, for the prevention of the losse of the town, borrowed 200.l. for which I yet pay use, for defending a small part of that place, having for these four years last, spent more to defend my self and the town against the sea, than all the rents and profits of lands and houses will amount unto, and yet still subject and in danger to lose the whole, for neglect and want

of a fuller reparation; so as if I be not speedily relieved herein, I shall be utterly undone thereby, besides the losse of the town, and endangering the whole Island, making way for our enemies entry there. Nevertheless all this time have I had my Rents lesse to all assessments and taxes to the full, which I have paid, besides my free and voluntary contributions in the beginning of the warres, even beyond and above my ability: With the first I sent in all my Plate, being above 20. l. and upwards: Afterward, when my Lord of *Warwick* came to *Sandwich*, he being set in the Town-hall with the Major and Brethren, and called the Townsmen before him, to the end to see and understand how willing the Townsmen were to subscribe for men and monies; when the best and ablest man there did not subscribe for above five men, and yet most of the subscribers did not send in their monies, being forty shillings for every man; Notwithstanding, I did subscribe for six men, and according to my undertaking sent twelve pounds by a safe messenger of my own charge: but in regard the greater part of the subscribers did not send in their monies according to their undertaking, my mony was returned back unto me, with which I bought a very good Gelding for the State, being the first man that bought any horse for the publike service there: seven moneths I kept this horse upon my own charge, which cost me five shillings a week at the least: when the Troop was made up, I furnished the Rider, of my own proper charge, with pistols, saddle, and all other furniture fitting, and likewise provided and gave the Rider sword, boots and spurs, with mony in his purse for his further encouragement, at which my doings some with us were not a little displeased; neither was I afterwards backward upon any occasion offered, to expresse my willingness and readines to advance the service of the Parliament.

But the eminent danger we were daily subject unto by reason of the outbreakings of the sea, the greatest and best part of the Jetée works being taken away; The which for want of due reparations, in *January* last I came up with a Petition subscribed near with three-score hands, thereby desiring an Order from the Parliament for some Tymber out of some Delinquents lands, to make up the sea-works, and to have the accustomed Scot continued for the preservation of the Town of *Margate*, which Petition, upon reading, was very well approved of, though I had attended five weeks before I could have the same read, but at length with much sollicitation I obtained the same;

And your Lordship, upon reading thereof, declared, how you conceived 200 Tuns of Tymber would be too little for the work: and thereupon your Lordship, with the rest of the Committee, gave order to view the sea works at *Margate*, but before I could procure the Gentlemen appointed to meet to view the same, I was put to above twenty severall journies, to my no little travell and charge.

The Gentlemen appointed for that purpose, promising to come to *Margate*, I provided a dinner of my own charge for them, but two only came, who told me they could do nothing of themselves without another: Thereupon I intreated them, though they wanted one of their number, they would give way to some Workmen to measure the works, whereupon workmen were sent for, so I procured three Carpenters, who measured 55 rods of work, which they cast up, and they conceived every rod of work would take up five tun and a half of tymber for single work, and double work would ask as much more; It was two moneths before I could get them together, after I was forced to make severall journies to *Dover*-castle to procure Major *Bois* Governour thereof to *Margate*, and going often thither for that purpose, I hapned to meet with Sir *Henry Heyman* a Parliament man, with whom I made bold to lay open our grievance to him; whereupon he was perswaded to go to *Margate* with me, and at my request he desired and gained Major *Bois* to go with him: Vpon view of the works, they found the same was gone to ruine, and that the Peer of *Margate* was the cause of the destruction of a great part of the Town, and this Peere was accustomed to pay scot to the said works, but for these four years and upwards hath not paid one penny, yet some particular men make a benefit of the Peer mony, which can be proved by very able witnesse.

Our humble desire is, That there might be an account given every year to some Justices of the I ease there, the respective Mayors of *Sandwich* and *Dover* for the time being, and some of the Townsmen of *Margate* to be joyned with them for passing the accounts, and the one half of the profits of the overplus upon their accounts may be allowed for the maintaining the said works; and whereas our Scots were 2 s. the pound, we are willing for the ease of the town to take 12.d. the pound, and 1.d. the pound for goods shipt and unshipt, and 2.d. for every chaldron of coals from the buyer, and some other things mentioned for the ease of the houses: and lands which are in danger as  
afore-

aforesaid. And seeing the making up of the works will be a great charge, and if not timely done, will endanger the town; We desire to have Tymber from *Hide*, the Mayor there certifying that he hath wood will serve for that purpose (if order be given for the same) to the value of 100 Tun and upwards: And likewise if we may have Briefs granted for the free and voluntary collections of the well-affected in the Island and other adjacent Counties, it will much conduce to the furtherance of the works, and ease of the Townsmen of *Margate*. for otherwise we shall not be able (without wronging the arrears of the scots, which will lie heavy upon the inhabitants) to repair the works, and to raise the 200.l. for which I am engaged, and crave allowance of. This done; And if I may have secured the Scots for hereafter at 12.d. the pound, and have the profits of the overplus of the Peer, and poundage of other goods shipt and unshipt, as in a schedule is set forth: I will engage my whole estate, both lands and houses in *Margate* which is worth near 1000.l. for upholding the sea-works there for ever; which not any man (I believe) in all *Margate*, nor in the whole Island will undertake to do.

My Lord, I pray you consider of our present state and sad condition, I have been the larger in the relation thereof, for that I would have your Lordship not only informed of the truth thereof, and the danger we lie continually under, but likewise to let you see what trouble and charge I have been at, and how wearied and discouraged with attendance, often waiting on your Honour and the Committee, with Council; but hitherto all I could do, ineffectually, my travel lost, and the fees and monies given my Council, hath served to no purpose. By which doings and slow proceedings (if your Lordship afford not help) I shall be utterly disabled further to prosecute this good work, and every well affected will be discouraged either to ingage or undertake the same for the future; and what mischief may ensue thereupon, and how Malignants and disaffected will be emboldned who have opposed us herein, I leave to your Lordships consideration. When Major *Boys* gave me his warrant for 24 Tuns of tymber, which came to 36.l. being the arreare for one year due by the Peere of *Margate*, the same was slighted: when afterwards your Honour issued another warrant to the same purpose (you being then at *Wamenth* castle) confirming the Majors warrant, the same was likewise disregarded and disobeyed by the Peer wardens of *Margate*, who would neither give

in the timber, nor money in lieu thereof, but disposed the same as they thought good themselves, some to their private use, and selling some for signe-posts, yea though we would have given them ready money of our own for it, we could not have it, such is the malignancy and dissipation of these to this good and publike work. All which I hope your Honour will see timely remedied and redressed, and will not suffer us to be longer exposed to contempt, and such apparent destruction, nor further wearied and wasted with a long and fruitlesse attendance. Therefore my humble request unto your Lordship and the rest of the honourable Committee of the Admiralty, is, That you will be pleased to give your order and present direction for what you intend, and conceive fit to be done touching the whole busines: And thereby I, and many more shall have cause to blesse God for you, and shall ever be ready upon all occasions to expresse my thankfulness, and approve my self to be

*Your Lordships in all respective obedience*

July 14. 1646.

JOHN SMITH.

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The copy of a Certificate from the Mayor and Jurats of the Town of *Dover*.

**T**O all Christian people to whom these Presents shall come: JOHN GOLDBER Gent. Mayor of the Town and Port of *Dover* in the County of *Kent*, and the JURATS of the same, send greeting in our Lord God everlasting.

Forasmuch as we hold it the office of Magistrates, and the duty of all other persons, to certifie and declare the truth, in all matters and things doubtfull or suspicious, whereby wrongs and injuries may be avoyded, and truth take place and be manifeste, especially being thereunto requested: Knew ye therefore, that a great part of the Village of *Margat* in the Isle of *Shear* in the said County, a Limb of this Town and Port, is in danger to be overflowed and ruined by the Sea, (the Works and Jetties about 25 years past made at the great charge of the then Inhabitants there by Scors granted and allowed by the then Commissioners of Sewers for those parts, having been of late, for want of repaire, subverted and inuined by the rage and violence of the Sea) and thereby divers houses overwhelmed, feet and horse-ways diverted, and other houses likely to be carried to sea, to the impoverishing of divers persons, and decay of the said Village, if some speedy course be not taken for the repaire and making of other Jetties there. In witnesse whereof, We the said Mayor and Jurats of the said Town and Port, the Seale of Office of Majorality of the same Town and Port have caused to be set and put, the four and twentieth day of December, Anno Dom. 1645. Exam. per me Fra. Raworth, Com. Clet. p. li. et Port Dover.



*Right Honourable,*

**I**N pursuance of your Lordships command, The Peere at Margate, and the defence made by the Works at the Shore for the defence of the Town have been surveyed by Sir *James Oxenden* Knight, Major *Boys* Governor of Dover-castle, and *Henry Crisp* of *Queeks* Esq;  
And we find,

That about 25 or 26 years since, there was a peece of work added to the said Peer of *Margate*, which had proved very advantagious for the Peer, but desperately ruinous for part of the said Town.

That before the making of the aforesaid new peece of Peerwork, it is not known to any man living that ever there was any work at the shore for the defence of any of the houses of *Margate*, or that there was any need of any such work; but since the making of that new peece of Peerwork, there hath been as much Tymber-work set down by the Inhabitants at the shore for the defence of the houses there, as by credible relation hath cost them fifteen hundred pounds and upwards, the which is now wholly ruined by violence of the sea.

Whereupon we conceive, that if the Peer be continued as now it is, the Town must suffer; and if the Peer do not continue as now it is, the Peer will quickly fail, and the Publique suffer for want of trade.

The houses at *Margate* now in danger, are conceived to be near the fourth part of the Town, and will require fifty five rods of new work, which will take up five tun and a half to every Rod of single work (by the judgement of the best experienced workmen) For which they are humble suitors to your Lordships.

*James Oxenden, Kt. Major Boys, Esq;*

*Henry Crisp, Esq;*

Right Honourable,

**I** Humbly desire that You will be pleased to consider the great charges I have been at these four years, for the care of the Town of Margate, and that you will give me a speedy answer.

1. I was constrained to hyre 200. pounds, to keep up a small part of the Town for the preservation of it, paying interest for it.

2. I have been eight moneths, since I got my Certificate from Dover, and three severall journies to London, and many journies I made before I could get my Report; and long waiting with great charges, with Counsels and other expences, which hath cost me above sixscore pounds.

3. It is above an hundred pounds out of my way, by neglecting of my Calling, upon this businesse.

4. There is not one man in Margate alloweth me a penny towards my charges: I have waited these seven weeks in London with no little expences; If I had set out twenty Light-horses on my own charge, it would not have put me more to misery: This publike busines hath cost me for my own self above 420. pounds.

I desire your Honours that you will take some speedy course for Tymber and Monies, otherwise the Town will suddenly come to ruine. And that your Honours will be pleased to passe an Ordinance for continuing of the Scot, and for payment of the arreares due upon the same to the Expenditor John Smith, And that all such houses as are scotred towards the Sea, may be free from all other assessments, And that your Honours be pleased to send six Brasse peece of Ordinance, and Ammunition for the preservation of that part of the Kingdom in Margate, for it is a place of great concernment.

FINIS.